



Sunny Days Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY289730
Inspection date	16 November 2005
Inspector	Sarah Jane Rhodes
Setting Address	Knypersley First School, Newpool Road, Knypersley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST8 6NN
Telephone number	01782 297900 school
E-mail	
Registered person	Sunny Days Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sunny Days Playgroup opened on its present site in 2004 and operates from a classroom at Knypersley First School. It is situated in a residential area in Knypersley, Staffordshire. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09:00 until 15:00, term time

only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 40 children from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 1 child receives funding for nursery education. Children come from a local catchment area.

The nursery employs six staff. Three of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene through planned routines. They know, for example, that they have to wash their hands before lunch and after using the toilet. However due to the distance to the toilet facilities from the playroom, some children use a communal washing bowl before lunch, this exposes children to the risk of cross infection. Regular cleaning of the playroom appears to sustain adequate levels of hygiene and helps to reduce the risk of general cross contamination. However substantial mould growth on the doors and windows is present.

Clear procedures for sick and infectious children prevent the spread of infection and keeps children healthy. However whilst accident records are maintained these are not countersigned by parents to acknowledge the entry. The children are sometimes discharged into the care of the school or an after school club, and the manager has no way of ensuring parents are informed that their child has had an accident. Similarly although parents written permission is always sought to administer medication, the parents rarely countersign the medication record to acknowledge the entry. Therefore parents will be unaware of the actual time medication was administered, which hinders their ability to plan further treatment.

The setting works in partnership with parents to meet the children's individual dietary needs. Staff ensure they are fully aware of special diets. They provide a range of healthy snacks for break time and the choice of milk, juice or water. The children also have access to water throughout the sessions ensuring they are not left thirsty. Parents provide packed lunches and staff give advice on healthy and safe items for non-refrigerated storage.

Children enjoy opportunities for physical exercise during every session. Access to outside play space is limited so staff timetable the use of large equipment into the indoor environment and supplement this with nature walks in the local area. Limited facilities for children to rest are available for children to use at any time during the sessions.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in an adequately organised environment. Staff monitor access to the playgroup at all times and the school campus is secure during the sessions. Written risk assessments are in place but not currently used by the manager, however, she did have a satisfactory understanding of how to limit risks through appropriate safety and security measures. Children are reminded about safe practices, for example, the correct use of the climbing frame and fire evacuation procedures. This helps children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe.

Children use a range of safe, developmentally appropriate resources. These are organised by staff for children to select from. The room and session is organised to allow for a variety of activities to be undertaken by children without undue risk. For example, large physical play is undertaken in a defined area during part of the session, allowing equipment such as the large rocking horse or climbing frame to be appropriately supervised.

Children are adequately protected by staff that have a satisfactory understanding of child protection issues and reporting procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident in the settings welcoming environment. They have positive relationships with staff and receive comfort and attention when they need support. They play cooperatively most of the time. A varied range of activities is offered each day and children show appropriate interest as they build with construction sets, play with dough, paint and use the imaginative play props. However the fixed routine at group toileting and snack times, where children wait without meaningful activity, means children's enjoyment during this period is limited and subsequently their behaviour deteriorates.

Children benefit from a good range of resources to promote imaginative play and they play together in groups in the home-corner acting out activities, such as nursing dolls and cooking. Children further develop their imaginative skills through role play, when the home-corner is changed into a different scene depending on the current theme. As a result their social skills are developing adequately. Children can access toys set out by staff, this allows them to make some choices for themselves.

There is no system to assess children's development or record their progress. This means staff rely on their memory of each child's ability to tailor activities to their needs. With only one full-time member of staff there is no reliable way to plan the next steps in children's play and learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Children do not make enough progress because the plans lack the necessary detail and no assessments of children's abilities and progress are undertaken. Although staff record activities under each area of learning, the learning intention is rarely included and very little detail of

the activity to be undertaken is recorded. For example, 'Sorting cars', an entry under mathematical development, the activity included recognition of size, colour as well as number and sets, but this was not recorded. Staff do not use the stepping stones to clearly identify children's achievements and there are no plans for the next steps in their learning. The group relies on the memory of the staff members to recall areas covered during activities and children's individual progress. The lack of evaluation means that activities are not adapted to enable all children to participate and be appropriately challenged.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet staff both on their arrival at the setting and if they see them during their nursery sessions whilst in the school building. Children are generally interested and engaged in their free play as they select and carry out activities and assume limited responsibility for their personal care. Children behave acceptably most of the time, with staff reinforcing boundaries as required.

Children speak clearly and confidently, but do not always listen intently to stories in large groups. They have no access to books during the rest of the session and therefore cannot select books to look at for pleasure or develop their skills in handling books. Opportunities for them to use pencils and crayons are limited to planned activities, but older children are encouraged to form letters and write their names during these activities.

Children are beginning to understand mathematical concepts and use numbers. They count to five as part of a group and, when sorting objects they can add one more to a group. Staff encourage children's understanding of shape, colour, quantity and size during planned sessions. However, children do not practise counting and comparing during everyday routines. This means that children do not use number names and number language spontaneously.

Children develop an initial sense of time and space, and gain some knowledge of their environment through regular walks in the local area. Children use photographs to recall events and help with discussions. They are introduced to other cultures and customs as they celebrate a range of festivals.

A climbing frame and large play equipment is made available inside for children to develop their coordination and physical strength. There is limited access to outside play areas. They enjoy exploring different textures such as dough and sand and can confidently use small tools such as paint brushes and scissors. Children express themselves through painting. They use their imaginations well as they play in the home-corner, making up their own imaginative games, such as pretending to be 'scary monsters'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy positive relationships with the staff and with each other for the majority of the sessions. All children are seen as individuals and their specific needs are met. Their confidence and self-esteem is developed by staff using praise and their work is

neatly displayed, showing the importance placed upon their achievements. However they do not have opportunities to develop their independence and therefore further enhance their self-esteem, by, for example, helping to prepare the mid session snack. There is a satisfactory range of resources to raise children's awareness of diversity and some festivals from a range of cultures are celebrated. Children go for walks around the local area and have strong links with the primary school. These activities and resources help the children develop their knowledge of the wider world and raise their awareness of diversity. The setting's policies promote inclusion for all children and they have started to think about how reasonable steps can be taken to ensure access to all. Appropriate support is provided for children with special needs.

Children behave well for some of the time and sometimes respond positively to boundaries set by staff. The children do not always take turns and share, sometimes hitting one another. Disruptive behaviour is most noticeable in the period around the organisation of snack time, when the children have no meaningful activity whilst waiting. Staff have removed children's access to books because of their destructive behaviour when handling books and at the present time children are not able to learn the correct way of using and caring for books. Staff do remind children of the rules and expectations of conduct, they use praise to value the children's contributions and thank children when, for example, they help to clear away or sit well at story time. This positive approach along with the activities around equal opportunities, fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children derive some benefits from a limited but satisfactory partnership between staff and parents and carers. Children settle because the staff exchange information verbally to ensure the child's needs are met. However there is no system to exchange information with parents who do not drop off or collect their child due to their use of the school nursery or after school club. This compromises parents ability to offer appropriate care for their child at the end of the day, due to a lack of up to date information on, for example, any accidents that have occurred. Parents are made aware of how the setting operates through discussion, the introductory letter and access to the policies and procedures upon request. There is a complaints procedure in place which is shared with parents. Parents are encouraged to become involved on the management committee.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is inadequate. They exchange limited information verbally and have in the past shared children's development files with parents. However, currently there are no development records to be shared with parents, no details of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage or how they can enhance their own child's learning. Consequently parents are given insufficient information to help them fully understand how their child makes progress through the stepping stones.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Ofsted has been informed about the changes to the committee that makes up the registered body, but has no record of being informed of the change in manager.

There is, however, the required number of qualified staff, and the manager ensures the adult to child ratios are maintained.

Children's records and staff details are stored securely in a locked cabinet. However the setting does not have a written procedure to be followed in the event of a child becoming lost. Staff do not obtain parents signatures on the accident record and despite getting parents written permission to administer medication they do not get them to countersign the medication records to acknowledge the entry. This compromises the children's safety in an emergency.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Both the manager and the committee chair are new to their posts. A voluntary committee is effective in meeting some of the children's needs. For example, there are recruitment procedures which ensure staff are appropriately vetted, and unvetted committee members are supervised. There is no formal induction for staff, the manager ensures all relevant issues are covered with staff during their first week of employment. Regular staff meetings then keep staff informed of changes. Appraisals identify staff training needs at regular intervals throughout the year, and this contributes to the quality of care that is provided. The lack of planning and assessment means children in receipt of funding for nursery education are not always achieving. The new manager does have a clear vision of improvements that are required and a commitment to improving practice. However, at the present time, overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of children who attend the playgroup.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that systems are in place to inform parents about accidents and gain their signature on the accident records, similarly ensure parents countersign any entry in the medication record
- ensure Ofsted is informed of all significant events including changes in the manager
- ensure a procedure is in place to be followed in the event a child becomes lost

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- develop planning to include more clearly the learning intentions for activities and how activities can be adapted to suit children of all abilities
- provide opportunities for children to use writing for communication, using a range of mediums to develop their writing skills
- develop children's abilities to use books for enjoyment and explore a range of words and texts, not only in group situations but also independently
- ensure parents are kept fully informed of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and provide information on how they can become involved in their child's learning in meaningful ways
- develop assessment records for all children that enable staff to assess children's abilities on entry and plan the next steps for their play and learning, share these records on an ongoing basis with parents and carers.

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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